Benefits of walkable and bikeable communities

Investing in the improvement of walking and bicycling infrastructure can enhance communities and retail areas and generate more tourist activity.

Walkability, measured using 'Walk Scores,' improves home values. "An additional one point improvement in average Walk Scores adds between $700 and $3,000 to the value of a typical house, holding all other factors constant."[1] Walk Score, www.walkscore, measures walkability on a scale of 0 – 100 and is based on distance along walk routes to amenities such as grocery stores, schools, parks, restaurants, and shopping. A Vermont study reports walkable neighborhoods have property values $6,500 higher than those of car dependent areas.[2]

Walking and biking is less expensive than driving. Walking is relatively free and the bicycle operating cost is approximately $308.[3] In 2015 the average cost to operate a sedan was approximately $8,698.[4]

A University of Northern Iowa economic impact study, "Economic and Health Benefits of Bicycling in Iowa," reports that more than $400 million in economic activity in Iowa due to commuter and recreational bicycling.

Economic and Health Benefits of Bicycling in Iowa	
Bicycle Commuters	
Estimated bicycle commuters	24,921
Economic activity	$51,965,317
Health savings	$13,266,020
Recreational Riders	
Estimated riders	149,916
Economic activity	$364,864,202
Health savings	$73,942,511
Source: Economic and Health Benefits of Bicycling in Iowa, University of Northern Iowa, Fall 2011	

Similar economic impact studies in Colorado, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Vermont show similar economic finding of beneficial economic impact of the bicycling activities.

A 2012 study, "Katy Trail Economic Impact Report," show that "400,000 annual visitors to Katy Trail State Park have a total economic impact of $18,491,000 a year, which supports 367 jobs

[1] http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/assets/Uploads/2009WalkingTheWalkCEOsforCities.pdf
[2] Resource Systems Group, Inc., Economic and Policy Resources, Inc., and Local Motion Economic Impact of Bicycling and Walking in Vermont, March 8, 2012, http://www.localmotion.org/documents/advocacy/Final_Draft_Report_Econ_Impact_Walking_and_Biking_030812.pdf
[3] http://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/equity_report.pdf
[4] http://newsroom.aaa.com/tag/2015-your-driving-costs/

with a total payroll of $5,128,000. The total value added to the local community from visitor spending is $8,204,000."[5] The study also report that 2/3 of the users of the trail were not local, but visitors.

The Tour of Missouri bicycle events had a direct economic impact estimated at over $80 million a three years period, with $38 million in tax revenues.[6]

Trails or greenways along with other pedestrian and bicycle facilities attract tourist. Communities holding the 'Bicycle Friendly Community' and 'Walking Friendly Community' designations report this recognition is good for business.[7]

Several studies have shown that while pedestrians and bicyclist spend less per trip at local business than person traveling by car, the pedestrians and bicyclist make more trips to the businesses and spend more throughout the month.[8]

Every $1 million of spending on pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects create 8–12 jobs. Every $1 million of expenditures on road infrastructure projects only creates 7 jobs.[9]

Besides the direct financial and health benefits of walking and bicycling, the shift to non-motorized travel from personal vehicular transportation can possibly contribute to the reduction of traffic congestion and produce savings in time, fuel and money to those using personal vehicles.

[5] http://mostateparks.com/sites/default/files/Katy_Trail_Economic_Impact_Report_Final.pdf
[6] Tour of Missouri. (2010). Tour of Missouri Set to Cancel for 2010, May 27, 2010. http://mobikefed.org/content/tour-missouri-set-cancel-2010
[7] Maus, J. (2006, June 15). Portland bicycle industry worth $63M. BikePortland.org. Retrieved from http://bikeportland.org/2006/06/15/survey-says-bicycle-industry-nears-63m-1476
[8] Clifton, K., Muhs, C., Morrissey, S., et al. (2013). Examining Consumer Behavior and Travel Choices. Retrieved from http://www.otrec.us/project/411
[9] Garrett-Peltier, H. (2010, December). Estimating the Employment Impacts of Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Road Infrastructure Case Study: Baltimore. Retrieved from http://www.downtowndevelopment.com/pdf/baltimore_Dec20.pdf

Other good resources:

http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/Final_Econ_Update%28small%29.pdf

http://www.bikewalkalliance.org/storage/documents/reports/2014BenchmarkingReport.pdf

These are where a lot of the above came from.